/121 cont'd/
608 178 our judge in case of litigation; nobody would have dared to address himself to the Chinese mandarins for fear of reprisals on the part of the t'ou-se. I believe we /122/ must look in this direction for the solution to our problem. As a matter of fact, the Chinese court [428] recognizes only the sons' right of inheritance and, lacking them, that of members of the paternal side. In case of litigation, the paternal side is always sure to win its case against an only daughter, and the brother husband-son-in-law, as long as adoption has not been practiced, can always hope to see his rights recognized in his original family. Several verdicts of this kind suffice to deform a custom and create a completely new attitude. In addition, a tested virtue is necessary to be able to resist such temptations!

2. Exchange of a Girl for Furnishing of Services for a Fixed Number of Years

583 565 466 Everyday experience having proved that the preceding solution is not practical, say the T'ou-jen, there are people who look for another, more psychological in fact. Indeed, the sight of the end of one's own troubles in a future relatively near at hand gives the courage to remain faithful to duty. A family of poor or even average means can promise to give their daughter to a poor young man provided that he binds himself to work five, eight, ten, or 12 years for them.

675 466 606 583 The contracts for these marriages are generally made by the parents themselves, with one or two individuals who act as guarantors for the son-in-law. While in the preceding case the girl can be nubile at the time when a husband is being found for her, in the present case the arrangement always takes place when the girl is only seven, eight, or ten years old at the most. As for the age of the son-in-law, there is nothing definite: he can be ten or 12 years old as well as 30 and even more. When the girl is 15, they will have a little festival, and she will wear her hair in the fashion of married women; then she is married.

Why this engagement when the girl is still a child? /123/ It it because they know one another in the country and do not want to

/123 cont'd/

Mo 675 606 466 583 be duped all down the line. As a matter of fact, as soon as the girl is 15 and is married, she, like her husband, will want to be more free. She will let him persuade her that one can work everywhere and that there is nothing more to be gained in the home of the parents-in-law. One day there is an argument in the family, and the couple disappears. Now at this moment the family of the parents-in-law will already have profited by at least several years of work by the son-in-law. It rarely happens that the son-in-law is faithful to his pledges to the end. It is then a frail alliance.

Mo 608 606 583 171 Ma 606 608 583 The present case is the usual case of husband-sons-in-law. It enjoys a very wide diffusion all over Asia, among the Turkish, Mongol, and Manchu peoples and among the peoples of northern Asia (1),

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., p. 75: There is also a very interesting custom of getting a wife by personal work in the house of the future father-in-law. A poor man who cannot pay "kalim" through the intermediary of some person asks the bride's father to give him his daughter against his personal work in the house of his future father-in-law. The minimum period of this is three years and the maximum ten years. The future son-in-law lives in the house of his future father-in-law, but he always has his separated spirits and goes to his clan's meetings and sacrifices. After the fixed period is expired, they make a very modest wedding and the young husband brings his wife to his own house or lives in the house of his wife's father as a workman at a fixed salary. Sometimes the father-in-law gives the

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

Service for Prayers and Alms Collections:

A strict condition of service continues which compels the farmers of the monastery to invite the lamas of the intendancy, whose fields they till, to perform both public religious rites in the village, and private services in individual families. Lamas of one intendancy or monastery are not allowed to perform these rites among subjects of another intendancy. In the same way, when lamas are touring for alms among the subjects of their own intendancy, lamas of other monasteries are not allowed to tour. 792 571

The intendancies urge the observance of this service even by former tributaries, but it does not always work. The Tibetan tribe of Sumdoo, former tributary of the community of lamas of Erh-ku-lung, accused the intendancy, in 1918, of trying to occupy a part of its territory. The Chinese court, however, recognized the ownership of the debatable ground by the tribe. Sumdoo, having a grudge against the intendancy, invited the intendancy of Seerkok to perform a tribal religious rite. The day preceding the appointed day, a group of furious lamas from Erh-ku-lung, intending to assert their prerogative to conduct the service, arrived and started with the prayers. All the ladies of the tribe, engaged in preparing the food for the three-day solemnity, arrived ranting, panting, and cursing the lamas with feminine fury, and threw their boots at the heads of the bewildered lamas. The lamas, powerless against the infuriated women, returned to their intendancy. 792 571 79 578

The next day, when the solemnities had already been started by the lamas of Seerkok, the intendant of Erh-ku-lung arrived with an imposing retinue to assert his rights. All the men of the tribe vanished, entrusting the emergency to the ladies, who arrived with the same threatening appearance of the former day, and the intendant and his retinue understood that the relations between the intendancy and Sumdoo were sundered forever. This incident illustrates the psychology of the lamas in trying by all means to retain their old rights, even among tributaries with whom all legal connections have been cut off.

Repair of the Lamasery:

The chiefs of the villages inhabited by the subjects of the intendancies are ordered by their respective intendancy to send a fixed number of men to repair the buildings belonging to the intendancy, to chop wood, grind wheat, thresh the harvest, sweep snow, and build roads or bridges. The subjects are still willing to comply with these corvées. 792 466

Travel of the Chief of the Lamasery:

When the supreme chief of the lamasery makes a long journey, the chiefs of the intendancies order the chiefs of the villages to send a couple of horsemen each 792 484 651

[p.48(A)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

cording to the rules, occupy the time in meditation or prayer. 792 157

A good lama should daily, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, walk around the monastery saying his beads and prostrating himself at the small shrines along the ritual way. In the fourth moon he makes the same round, prostrating himself the whole way along. This is said to be really exhausting work.

Every year a good lama enters a retreat at home for two weeks. He does not leave his room, talks with no one, and cancels all appointments with visitors. He prays and reads texts the whole day and offers the ritual tea four times daily before the image. A good lama never sits on a bench or chair, but always squats [516] cross-legged on the floor or the k'ang, barefooted, his clothes adjusted decently. He eats only mutton, beef, or pork, never the meat of the horse, donkey, hare, or [262] chicken, or fish or eggs. Lamas are not allowed to raise sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, or donkeys. A model lama lives in retirement, avoiding mixing with the groups of lamas who play chess and cards all night, or indulge in endless gossip, or tell smutty jokes and indecent stories, for the saying goes that "nothing is dirtier than the tongue of a lama." A good lama deals with books with reverence, putting them, wrapped in a yellow silk scarf, before the Buddha statues, carrying them on his back when traveling. A good lama does not even go to say prayers at private homes, when invited by the people; he does not leave the monastery.

These notes, given by older lamas and young Wendees, reveal what lamas think about an ideal lama and what sort of ideal is held up before young lamas. However, in order to be able to become an "ideal lama" some wealth is required, or at least an honorable competency, and it is precisely the lack of this primary condition which provides the clue to most of the miseries of individual lamas and the ruin of many monasteries.

HOW LAMAS PROVIDE FOR THEIR SUBSISTENCE

792

Lamas have to earn a living, because support furnished by the monastery is insufficient. Poor lamas try to find a full-time job in the several intendancies of the monastery or with the minor Living Buddhas, or by accompanying expeditions to collect alms, or by working in the printing offices. Many find a part-time [466] job carrying water every day for several rich lamas, driving animals to the pasture grounds and then back home again, selling cow dung and fuel. Lamas like to be hired, by a lama whose pupil has abandoned him, to search for and bring back the strayed pupil. Lamas try to buy a young, nicely built horse or mule, and are happy to hire young lamas who will work every day at breaking it to the saddle, in order that they will be able to sell it in the cities or in Lhasa, where such animals command a good price. Lamas

supposed to have offended. It is for that reason that during the rite of spring all the spirits are invited by the shamans to come down along the rope to be honored by the villagers so that all of them may extend their protection. 772 782

In the Halachih Valley, among subjects of the Lu T'u-ssu, I encountered the following case. At the time of division of a parental inheritance, a son considered that the decision made by the elders of the village was unjust toward him, and at the very moment when he should have appended his signature, he ran into the courtyard, pencil in hand, crying toward the sky: "Twelve Tengris, protectors of our family, you know that the division is unjust, that I am compelled to apply my signature." Then he entered the room and signed. In such circumstances the ultimate recourse of every Chinese would inevitably be to invoke "Old Father Heaven" and never another spirit. 776 428

Carpenters, building a temple in Sumdoo, having had trouble with the chief of the tribe, proposed to go to the monastery of Erh-ku-lung in order to take the oath before the statue of Buddha. The chief answered, "No need to go so far, take the oath here, Buddha is everywhere; he will know it." 776 466

The belief that all the spirits are everywhere, know all things, bless and punish independently, and that they are just and equitable, is deeply ingrained in the minds of the Monguors of today. It is easy to understand that in a society in which each department is administered by a particular spirit, independent and omnipotent in its sphere, little room is left for the activities of the "spirit of Heaven"; that finally "Heaven," the "Great Heaven," occupies a role of honorary dimensions and nominal importance, and the characteristics and activities of the "spirit of Heaven" among the Monguors are hard to define. 776

Can "Heaven," which is unable to control the good spirits, control the evil spirits? According to the Monguors, no spirit can control the department of its neighbor, and so in case of interference of evil spirits, magical devices are contrived in order to drive away and combat the evildoers and make them harmless. The good spirits, however, are invited to participate in the struggle against them. When the spirits of hail threaten the village with devastation, magic devices are used by the shamans, and the spirit protectors of the village are carried to the battlefield, and Buddha and "Heaven and all the spirits" are invoked. If they are unable to match their opponents, they abandon the struggle, rushing with their carriers through rivers and precipices. Good spirits can lend a hand in the struggle, but they may lose the battle and—so much for "Heaven and all the spirits." Facts speak for themselves.

Is not this fierce struggle between good and evil spirits, between representatives of two opposite worlds, reminiscent of Manichaeism, fervently practiced by Turkic peoples in Central Asia during the last centuries of the first millennium? [p. 150(A)] 771

/The Monguors/

N *563 M 614 565 554 [466] into another lord's service. If they attempted to do so, the punishment was death. After the great rebellion of the Moslems (1862-1878), however, the military power of the Monguor gradually declined. No T'u-ssu after this time really wielded any true power.

The principle of corvee, to which the Monguor were still liable, is founded on the vassalage which previously bound the nomads to the "service" of the chief. Although they neither tilled the soil nor paid taxes, nonetheless they were real vassals.

N *563 M 614 219 565 The register of all noble families is kept at the seat of the T'u-ssu. Even the daughters, and the families into which they marry, are noted. A noble is also entered in the book of genealogies. However, the names of unmarried sons are not inscribed, because they presumably have not produced sons for the clan.

N *563 M 174 565 M [554] When the Monguor first settled in their frontier territory and began the transition from nomadism to agriculture, there was probably considerable social distance between the commoners and the nobles. With settled life and the increasing dominance of agriculture, noble families, like commoner families, became increasingly dependent on their ability to manage their own farms. Local prestige was determined more and more by wealth and ability, and class became secondary.

N *563 M 621 622 565 The Monguor village consists of a group of families living in a well-defined territory and subject to the immediate authority of the village chief. All villagers till the soil, and the population is large or small according to the fertility of the soil and the extent of the pastures. Nobles and commoners live in the same kind of house, and they gain their livelihood in the same manner. Therefore, their substance and wealth are not sharply differentiated.

N *563 M 596 [421] [561] [595] M [428] Until 1922 the extended Monguor family was a patrilineal, patrilocal family under the authority of the grandfather, or the great-grandfather if he survived. No family usually exceeded four generation. Property and wealth were owned collectively, but authority over the property was unequally concentrated in the senior generation. Polygamy in Monguor society is decidedly an economic question, since polygamy does not go well with residence in a common courtyard. The breakup of an extended family is visibly symbolized when one of the nuclear families sets up its own kitchen. The position of chief or head of the family normally passes by primogeniture to the eldest son of the first wife of the previous head. In every family, rich or poor, noble or commoner, the head of the family is also the religious chief, the family administrator, and the family representative in dealing with higher authorities outside the family. In his administration of the family, he has authority over all the community property. The breakdown of the extended family usually takes place when the grandfather dies. It is very seldom that his surviving sons remain united under the authority of the eldest son. More commonly, the sons divide the property and "build their own kitchens.

M [182] [168] [428]

/The Monguors/

N *563 M 233 463 [466] because of the value of the animals entrusted to them. They are skillful in breeding, and in finding the best pasture. A shepherd is treated as a member of his employer's family; he receives the same food, and the daughters-in-law must show him the same respect they accord to the head of the family.

The Mongours hunt foxes, hares, pheasants and musk deer, using guns, traps and poison. The fox skins are sold to Chinese merchants and the best skins, used for lining the winter garments of the rich, bring a handsome price. Musk deer are also valuable game. The precious musk glands, used as a special drug or as an essence in perfume, are sold by weight to Chinese dealers.

N *563 M 226 Fishing is important in Koko Nor, where the lake produces an abundant supply. Mongour expeditions go there as soon as the lake has frozen over each winter. They go first to the chief of the Mongol or Tibetan tribe on whose shore they plan to operate, and present gifts such as wine, tobacco, noodles and the traditional ceremonial scarf of felicity in exchange for permission to fish and protection from the tribe. The fishermen usually go to the same territory every year, and become sworn brothers of the chief or some important local nomad. The expedition, which lasts about two months, involves hard work in the bitter cold, but the profits are sufficient reward. Preservation of the fish is no problem; they freeze immediately after they are caught. They are carried to the market in Hsi-ning, or sold to Moslem merchants who engage in caravan trade.

M [251]

N *563 M 438 439 Mongours carry on their trade largely with Chinese and Chinese Moslem merchants. The Moslems are an energetic and enterprising people who drive caravans of pack mules from house to house in the Mongour country, exchanging cloth, needles and thread for wool, skins, eggs and grain. In the autumn they collect oxen and sheep and drive them in small herds to Hsi-ning. The Chinese merchants do business on a larger scale. They send their representatives to pitch tents and display their wares at lama monastery festivals and at the annual celebrations and meetings of the Mongour clans. During the fall, when the Chinese Moslems are buying up sheep and oxen, the Chinese butchers of the cities send their agents to the Mongour villages to buy hogs. Chinese merchants also send their buyers into Mongour country for wool and skins, going from home to home. There are also peddlers, who deal largely in items needed in the Mongour home, such as needles, colored thread, cotton cloth, cheap jewelry, sugar and pipe tobacco. Business is always by barter, with the top-ranking woman of the Mongour household doing the bargaining. As the peddler travels a long distance, it is customary to provide him with a place to sleep. Before he leaves he presents the hostess with a small token of apprecia-

M [437]